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Evaluation of the Sustainability of the Support to Primary Education Project in Cameroon

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Acronyms

APE	Association of Parents of Students
ATA	Assistant Technical Advisors
CD	Comite de Gestion
COP	Chief of Party
ENS	Ecole Normale Superieure
ERNWACA	Education Research Network for West and Central Africa (ROCARE in French)
GRC	Government of the Republic of Cameroon
IPAR	Institute for Practical Rural Application
MINEDUC	Ministry of National Education
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
PIL	Project Implementation Letter
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SPE	Support to Primary Education Project
TA	Technical Advisor
TTC	Teacher Training College

Preface

The U.S. Agency for International Development's Africa Bureau sent two investigators to Cameroon at the end of 1996 to determine the sustainability of the Support to Primary Education Project (SPE), which USAID terminated in 1989. Dr. Abraham Usman, originally from the Northwest Province of Cameroon and who until recently served as an economist at USAID/Accra, conducted the investigation along with Dr. William M. Rideout Jr., an educational planner, professor, and program leader at the University of Southern California. Dr. Rideout served as principal investigator when the project was being implemented and also as a member of the World Bank's team at Cameroon's educational reform conference (*États Généraux de l'Éducation*) held in Yaounde October 7–11, 1996.

The investigators took the following steps in preparing for this evaluation:

- Reviewed the project and its accomplishments prior to termination;
- Described the impact of the closure of the teacher training colleges on project objectives;
- Explained what has happened since the end of the project and this evaluation; and
- Determined if and where project sustainability perseveres.

Project Time Line, Design, and Structure

The Government of the Republic of Cameroon (GRC) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) completed the project agree-

ment for the Support to Primary Education Project (*Projet Soutien à l'Enseignement Primaire*) on March 14, 1984. The stated purpose of the project was "to improve the quality of life" by "improving the access to, and the efficiency of, primary schooling" in four designated provinces—those with the lowest national rates of elementary-school enrollment—the Northwest, Far North, North, and Adamaoua.

The University of Southern California (USC) was selected in November 1984 as the contractor for the technical assistance component of SPE, and the first long-term technical advisor (TA) arrived in Cameroon in July 1985. The project ended when USC was notified on January 31, 1989, that SPE had been terminated effective January 30, 1989. SPE had been implemented for three and one-half years out of the planned five.

As originally designed and negotiated, the project was to provide technical assistance (both in-service and preservice training), long-term and short-term training for counterparts, and construction of school facilities that would essentially double the capacity of participating SPE teacher training colleges (TTCs) in the project zone. It was the largest USAID-sponsored primary education effort in Africa in the mid-1980s with funding of \$27.6 million and a grant for \$11.4 million. The major portion was allocated to technical assistance and training, and a proposed loan of \$16.2 million was targeted for construction. The Cameroonian government was to contribute \$73.1 million, mainly in personnel costs and land acquisitions.

The project agreement between USAID and USC for technical assistance totaled \$8.7 million. The two major SPE technical assistance

counterparts in Cameroon were 1) designated teacher training college staff in the four project provinces (under the supervision of the director of Primary and Nursery Education in the Ministry of National Education) and 2) the Ministry of Education Inspector General's Office, which provided access to a cadre of inspectors in each province. Broadly speaking, TTC staff served as project counterparts for the improvement of preservice training while the inspectors supported the in-service training efforts. However, the two components worked closely together from the beginning of the project. Coordination, interaction, and a strong multiplier effect occurred during project implementation between those preparing new teachers and those retraining/upgrading teachers on the job.

Education delegates were appointed to be representatives of the Ministry of National Education (MINEDUC) at the provincial level, and like the directors at each of the TTCs, were critically important in implementing the project in each of the target provinces. The delegates contributed meaningfully to coordination and collaboration throughout the provincial educational systems.

The following TTCs were designated as project sites: TTC Bamenda, Northwest Province; TTC Ngaoundéré, Adamaoua Province; TTC Garoua and TTC Pitoa, North Province; and TTC Maroua, Far North Province.

The USC technical assistance team consisted of the following long-term advisors:

- Chief of party (assigned to the Department of Primary and Nursery Education at MINEDUC, Yaounde);
- Administrative and logistics expert;
- School construction and facilities advisor (one year only); and
- Technical advisors at four of the five project's teacher training colleges (Pitoa was served by the TA in Garoua).

The short-term technical advisors included the following:

- Library science advisor;
- Educational economist;

- Educational testing and measurement expert; and
- Project evaluation expert.

Assistant technical advisors (ATA) were subsequently assigned for approximately one year each to Maroua, Pitoa, Bamenda, and Yaounde.

Peace Corps volunteers (PCVs) were also assigned to or volunteered to help the project. During SPE's last year, five PCVs were involved in project activities.

In Yaounde, the chief of party and staff offices were located close to the director of Primary and Nursery Education, and at each of the teacher training colleges the TAs had offices next to the directors' offices. The provincial inspectors accompanied TAs on all field trips and attended all meetings (usually held at the TTCs) related to project planning and implementation. Educational delegates in each of the target provinces were briefed on project activities, and they participated when invited.

Cameroon has three regions, though some argue there are four distinct regions, and is comprised of 10 provinces. SPE was established in the northern three provinces, which are basically Sahelian, Muslim, and Francophone, and half of the Anglophone region (of the two Anglophone provinces, the Northwest Province was included but not the Southwest). The South, West, Central, and Littoral provinces in the Francophone region were not included. Nor was the East Province, which is Francophone but also a jungle area significantly less developed than the remainder of the southern Francophone zone (see Appendix 3).

Given such diversity, it was considered essential that project team building and project planning ensure adequate participation and inputs at the local and provincial levels since the educational access, enrollment, and literacy rates differed from province to province (see appendices 4 and 5).

Provincial delegates, inspectors, TTC administrators and professors, school directors, and teachers all participated in the planning phase as did the U.S. members of the local teams—the

TAs and ATAs in each province. Representatives from the Institute for Practical Rural Application (IPAR) in both the Anglophone and Francophone zones also expressed interest in participating in the SPE project. This approach encouraged a partnership and then ownership among the Cameroonian colleagues. Moreover, a surprising degree of decentralization occurred as project content, curriculum, and programming increasingly evolved at the provincial level rather than at the ministerial level in the capital city of Yaounde, as has historically been the case in French colonial governance traditions.

At the central government level, a significant bureaucratic component was built into the project design, the Project Implementation Committee (PIC), which included representatives from each of the four ministries involved in project implementation plus representatives from each division of MINEDUC involved with the project. Midway through the first year, the PIC created two subcommittees, one for training and the other for construction.

The Subcommittee for Training operated effectively throughout the life of the project with regard to the in-country programs and short-term training in the United States but was ineffective in implementing the long-term U.S. training component. The Subcommittee on Construction started off well, but the realization of construction goals became increasingly problematic when Cameroon began experiencing mounting economic difficulties. While the construction impasse failed to be resolved, the contract for the project's school construction and facilities advisor, provided under the technical assistance component, expired and USAID/Yaounde decided not to extend it. From that point on, the SPE team was only marginally involved in any of the interactions between the Cameroonian government and USAID/Yaounde on the construction segment of the project.

Technical assistance training was established at an impressive rate. According to the project plan, the initial emphasis was to be at the host TTCs and included preservice training for TTC

administrators, faculty, and students. The TAs and their local counterparts carried out those activities. Once the TTC training program was operational and increasingly self-sufficient, phase two (in-service) training programs intensified. These programs focused on inspectors, school directors, and primary school teachers. The expanded training operations were accomplished with the help of those already trained at the TTCs, and ATAs provided further assistance during the latter part of the project. The third phase of the program could not be implemented before the project was terminated. In this phase, Cameroonian colleagues were to assume direction and management of the project, with technical advisory support, for the final two years of training and implementation. Cameroonian counterparts were to be phased in, and become responsible for project performance, so as to maximize project sustainability.

During the last two years of the project, MINEDUC officials expressed an interest in having project TAs and ATAs assist Cameroonian counterparts in expanding SPE into the other six provinces—those not included in the original project. The ministry received increasing demands, which it found difficult to ignore, from the six excluded provinces to be included in the project's scope and activities.

Project Accomplishments

Materials Produced in Support of Project Objectives

Project personnel and Dr. Richard Akoulouze, the director of IPAR/Yaounde who worked closely with the project, produced a number of manuals. The titles are listed below. (The manuals printed in both English and French list the titles in both languages; if printed only in French or only in English, then the titles are given in the language of publication.)

1. Andre Girard, *Aide-Mémoire pour les Maîtres-d'École*, pp. 75.
2. Andre Girard, *Principes Administratifs de*

- l'Éducation au Cameroun*. pp. 23.
 Andre Girard, *Principles of Educational Administration in Cameroon*, pp. 22.
3. Andre Girard, *Vade-Mecum des Directeurs d'Écoles Primaires*, pp. 22.
 Andre Girard, *Handbook for Primary School Headmasters*, pp. 22.
 4. John Driscoll, *Les Auxiliaires Audio-Visuel pour l'École Camerounaise*. pp. 73.
 John Driscoll, *Manual on Audiovisual Aids*, pp. 71.
 5. Bernard Gagne et Professeurs de l'ENI-ENIAET de Garoua, *Programme d'Études*, ENI, pp. 204.
 6. Bernard Gagne et Professeurs de l'ENI-ENIAET de Garoua, *Programme d'Études*, ENIAET, pp. 100.
 7. Bernard Gagne, *Synthèse des Innovations Faites a Maroua, Ngaoundéré, Pitoa et Garoua*, pp. 23.
 8. Richard Akoulouze, *Bulletin d'Évaluation/Inspection des Enseignants*, pp. 10.
 9. Richard Akoulouze (ed.) and Nancy Kotowski, *Use of Basic Principles of the Teaching Process and Their Effect on Teaching Performance*, IPAR/Yaounde, Ministry of National Education, April 1988, pp. 56.
 Richard Akoulouze (ed.) and Nancy Kotowski, *Application des Principes de Base du Processus d'Enseignement et Impact sur la Qualité de l'Enseignement*, IPAR/Yaounde, Ministry of National Education, April 1988, pp. 59. (Nancy Kotowski was a PCV whose affiliation with IPAR/Yaounde and SPE was arranged with support from the chief of party.)
 10. Randell E. Trudelle, *Guidelines for Developing and Managing Maintenance Programs*, (in draft), pp. 96.

The last manual listed was prepared in draft form but not published or distributed because it was not adequately field tested prior to the end of the school construction and facilities advisor's contract. It could, however, be made available in a relatively short period of time following suitable nationwide field testing. The other manu-

als were reproduced in significant numbers and distributed to all Cameroonian counterparts, schools, and those participating in training programs.

In-Service Training Programs Completed

The project called for in-service training programs, focusing on such subjects as lesson planning, materials development, and child development. The following educators participated:

- Faculty members at the five project teacher training colleges;
- Teacher training college administrators;
- Provincial and departmental/divisional inspectors;
- Primary school directors; and
- Primary school teachers.

A special procedure was established for planning these training sessions. At each of the five TTC sites the TA, the TTC director, and other key Cameroonian educators assessed the needs of the in-service target groups. Several individuals from the *École Normale Supérieure*/Bamenda (the university's school of education that trains secondary and TTC schoolteachers and inspectors) as well as officials from the delegates' offices participated in the planning sessions as well. The assessments were conducted using several sources of information, including classroom observations; faculty/administrator and inspector meetings; discussions with the delegates in each province; consultations/interviews with relevant educators; and, after the training was in place, evaluations of previous seminars. From these inputs, the team developed preliminary themes that were then discussed with Cameroonian colleagues at the national level. The themes were then submitted to the Subcommittee on Training, which in turn recommended any changes that its members thought needed. In this way, a consensus was reached that combined input from both the bottom-up and top-down, and project training sites were notified on how to proceed with the training.

Two formal training formats were followed. One was a daylong workshop (the *journées*

pédagogiques), and the other was scheduled over four days. The Subcommittee on Training approved both training models. *The journées pédagogiques* were organized around themes and were often presented in the following four- to five-hour sequence, which was divided into three parts:

1. Presentation followed by questions and answers (1 1/2 hours);
2. Several small working groups (2 hours); and
3. Reports of small groups and synthesis (1 1/2 hours).

At the end of every session, each working group submitted a report outlining its discussions and recommendations. These were consolidated into a general training report that the participants reviewed and approved. All training session syntheses and recommendations were passed on to the Ministry of Education, which reviewed and responded to the documents and subsequently proposed follow-up actions. These reports also served as a feedback mechanism for the planners to evaluate the impact of SPE activities and to identify needs that should be incorporated into future programs. The four-day workshops followed a similar format but covered topics in greater depth.

During the three and one-half years of technical assistance, a total of 3,177 educators were

trained at both the one- and four-day seminars. The table below shows the target groups and the numbers trained in each group.

In addition to these two different types of formal training, TAs and Cameroonian counterparts (usually the divisional or subdivisional inspectors) conducted local, site-level training. These sessions for primary school teachers and directors were based on the same concepts and included many of the same materials used in the project's formal training sessions. It is estimated that 9,500 primary school teachers and directors in the four project provinces participated in such site-level training. (Again, many participated in more than one training session.) The SPE's provision of vehicles to the project's inspectors greatly increased the frequency of these on-site training sessions.

The number of participants trained during calendar year 1988 would have been considerably higher had programs not been crippled by the Minister of National Education's decision to suspend all national-level training activities. This suspension occurred in response to a misunderstanding between the Cameroonian government and USAID officials regarding the project's construction component at a January 1988 meeting. The ban lasted from February until August of that year. During that period, neither the Project

Implementation Committee nor the Subcommittee on Training met, although the project chief of party did meet regularly with key ministerial officials. Three national seminars (those including participants from more than one province) had to be canceled. However, provincial officials interpreted the ministry's cancellation as not including training that occurred within a province with local participants. Thus, all in-service activities conducted at the provincial, departmental, and local levels occurred on schedule—a signifi-

Target Groups	Number trained*
Faculty members at TTCs (total faculty of TTCs)	461
TTC staff (total staff of TTCs)	62
Inspectors (total inspectors for all four provinces)	208
Primary school directors	645
Primary school teachers**	1,801
Total	3,177
<p>* Participants attending training sessions. Many attended more than one.</p> <p>** Except for the last annual project training cycle, these primary school teachers all held MEGA (Maitre d'enseignement generale adjoint) classifications, which means they were not qualified.</p>	

cant accomplishment in terms of functional decentralization and in support of project training objectives.

Preservice Training Programs

During President Ahamadou Ahidjo's administration, the national policy was to train students outside of their regions of origin to promote national awareness, commitment, consciousness, and affinity among the nation's educators. The effect this policy had on the training of educators was that large numbers of south-central-coastal Francophones enrolled in northern TTCs, while relatively few northerners studied outside their own region because so few were qualified and available. The government fully funded TTC studies, and following graduation students were required to accept the positions MINEDUC assigned to them. The south-central-coastal Francophones that were trained in the northern region were normally assigned to teach there as well, but often they remained only until they could arrange a transfer to a position in the southern region closer to home.

The government also provided incentives to induce Francophone southerners to serve in the northern region. For example, the government provided special vacation bonuses of free transportation for teachers and their families to return to their home regions in the south for the summer. Even with such benefits, the turnover of teachers in the north was extremely high, while job turnover in the Anglophone Northwest Province was very low. Nevertheless, SPE's objective was to help the teachers in the northern provinces become as proficient as possible regardless of the length of their tenure in the target provinces. Every effort was made to increase the proportion of northerners attending TTCs so that the cadre of teachers willing to serve long term in the northern region would increase. As will be noted later, this constant "teacher drain" from northern schools has, under the new constitution, begun to be more constructively addressed with the government's decision to promote the enrollment of students in their respec-

tive provincial TTCs.

For the preservice training, SPE adopted as its pedagogical model the General Teaching Model, or *Modèle Générale d'Enseignement* in French, which is teaching by objective. In this model, the scientific and behavioral approach to the teaching-learning process is broken down into three basic segments: operational objectives, teaching strategies, and evaluation.

Over the first three years of the project, the TTC faculty designed, tested, and revised these approaches. By 1988, complete field-tested guides were produced and provided to all TTCs in the project provinces, and copies were also given to MINEDUC. These guides contain instructional materials and approaches to be used for the 20 required subject-matter areas of the TTCs' curricula. The director of Primary and Nursery Education enthusiastically accepted the guides on behalf of MINEDUC and envisioned them as being a model for a proposed national curricular reform. This reform, unfortunately, never occurred.

Another component of the preservice training was an emphasis on improving the effectiveness of practice student teaching. Project vehicles enabled student teachers to practice teaching at more distant and rural schools than had previously been possible. This permitted them to gain experience at both rural and urban schools.

A pertinent and reliable indicator of improvement in the teaching outcomes of the TTCs' students is their success in passing the final professional examination, the *concours professionnel*, that enables them to become civil servants and be assigned to teaching positions as qualified teachers. In the Anglophone Northwest Province, it was typical for all of the candidates who took the exam to pass and become qualified teachers.

While the SPE program was under way, improvements were notable in the northern region. For those qualifying for Class II positions, the success rate jumped from 71.2 percent to 98 percent in Pitoa, from 25 percent to 98 percent in Garoua, and from 26.6 percent to 91 percent in Ngaoundéré. For those qualifying for Class I

teaching positions, the success rate moved from 43.4 percent to 86 percent in Garoua and from 22.9 percent to 100 percent in Ngaoundéré. The program at Maroua remained at 100 percent both before and after the project's intervention.

Annual national examinations, which were identical in all provinces, were given to all students in TTCs throughout Cameroon. By the last year of the project, the examination scores of students in the project TTCs in the northern provinces were significantly higher than the scores of TTC students in the Francophone southern provinces—the first time that happened since Cameroon became independent. Interestingly, while the scores advanced impressively in the northern SPE area, they also showed a slight decrease in the southern Francophone TTCs.

Student enrollment in the project TTCs increased 32 percent during the first three project years in spite of the fact that the project's construction component failed to be achieved. The increased enrollments were in part attributable to better utilization of existing TTC facilities, which the TAs were instrumental in recommending.

When the project started, the level of access to primary schools in the northern region was under 30 percent, while in the south-central-coastal Francophone region it was approximately 85 percent. The annual percentage rate of increase in enrollment from 1984–85 (preproject) to 1985–86 and 1986–87 was significant—substantially above the national average in all project provinces, but especially in the northern provinces and especially for girls (see Appendix 6).

The TTC School Libraries Component

While the project ceased to have any responsibility for construction after the school construction and facilities advisor departed in January 1987, funds remained allocated for the TTC libraries. Had the libraries been built, the SPE team would have been instrumental in selecting books and equipment as well as training the personnel to maintain and operate them. In anticipation of continuing this element of the original project

design, a proposal contained in two USAID Project Implementation Letters (one on 12 February 1988 and the other on 13 August 1988) specified that the SPE library consultant should remain fully engaged through 1988. By the end of the project, the library consultant had accomplished the following:

1. Completed training workshops for Cameroonian staff who would be responsible for the libraries;
2. Presented (with support from the United States Information Service in Cameroon) a training session on library development that approximately 60 Cameroonians attended, several of whom volunteered to provide follow-up in-service training at TTC library sites;
3. Secured support from three Cameroonian librarians trained in the United States, the American librarian at Dschang (the university school of agriculture that also received USAID assistance), and the chief librarian at the University of Yaounde to provide follow-up support to the TTC libraries after the project was completed;
4. Acquired slides, catalogs, and bibliographies in France to be used in training exercises as well as to assist with the selection of books for each of the SPE TTCs;
5. Met with booksellers to examine English-language titles appropriate for the Bamenda site and attempted to ascertain whether the collections in both the Francophone and Anglophone TTC libraries were comparable; and
6. Prepared an order, in accordance with the project's budget, that would have permitted the procurement of an estimated 3,000 books for each of the TTC libraries; Cameroonian project counterparts also approved this selection.

After the library consultant's last field visit, USAID purchased about 50 books for each TTC that had a safe room where the books could be placed and used. At two of the sites, U.S. project personnel with private American donations established functional libraries. At Ngaoundéré, the

University of Southern California used nonproject funds to pay for the materials to partition a large room that could be used for dormitories, thus freeing a smaller room to become the library. Cameroonians contributed all the construction labor. At Maroua, a shell of a building was converted through private American contributions into a viable library. Nonproject funds from USC were used for the acquisition of bookshelves. The Kiwanis Club of San Diego, Calif., paid for security bars for the building. Cameroonians, including TTC Maroua students, provided free labor for the building's construction, and two Peace Corps Volunteers cataloged and classified the books so that TTC students could effectively use the facility. The library at Ngaoundéré was functioning for the regional seminar that took place there in November 1988; the Maroua library was ready for the national seminar that was scheduled to take place there in January 1989.

Training in the United States for Cameroonian Counterparts

The SPE project design included a long-term training component for personnel who were to become directly responsible for project sustainability once U.S. project personnel withdrew. In 1986 MINEDUC was asked to submit a list of candidates to be trained at the master's level in the United States, but more than half of those nominated were not qualified for graduate studies in the United States. After having been notified of this, MINEDUC withdrew the entire list and never presented further nominations. Part of the problem was that more than one ministry nominated candidates, and it appeared that the ministries deadlocked over whom and how many of the proposed participants were to be nominated from each. The impasse that developed was never resolved.

However, nine key Cameroonians (five high-ranking MINEDUC officials and four directors of project TTCs) participated in two short-term study-observation tours in the United States, one in October 1986 and the other in April 1987. Each group remained in the United States about

three weeks, and although their specific itineraries varied somewhat, both groups were impressed by the diversity of experiences they had in such a short period of time. The participants met with educational and government officials from the local, county, state, and national levels and visited classrooms, universities, county resource centers, and inner-city schools. They also visited schools attended largely by migrants, immigrants, and national minorities, including Native Americans. The participants' predeparture reports indicated that they were profoundly impressed by their educational experiences in the United States.

Project Termination and Closure of the TTCs

When Cameroonian officials were advised that USAID/Yaounde was giving serious consideration to terminating the SPE project, three ministers (the minister of national education, the minister of higher education, and the minister of plan) visited USAID/Yaounde to appeal for the continuation of the project. This was a unique demonstration of support for a USAID project in Cameroon. The Cameroonian government agreed to accept USAID's proposals contained in the project implementation letters (PILs) of 12 February 1988 and 13 August 1988. These PILs proposed modification of the program agreement to eliminate the construction component, except for the libraries, and to redesign the other elements of the project to concentrate on technical assistance. Apparently, the PILs were difficult for Cameroonian officials to accept, which perhaps explains their delayed response, since it meant agreeing to the cancellation of the \$16.2 million USAID contribution for TTC construction.

When SPE was terminated in January 1989, Cameroonian officials seemed caught off guard. Funds to cover the training costs previously paid by USAID had not been included in the MINEDUC budget for the remainder of the

1988–1989 academic year—December to June. (The Cameroonian academic year is basically the same as that of the United States.) While Cameroonian project counterparts did conduct some training at the local and provincial levels during 1989 and 1990, it was limited and accomplished without additional resources from MINEDUC.

At the end of the 1989-1990 academic year, the government closed all public teacher training colleges in Cameroon for the next five years. Why did the government make the decision to close the TTCs throughout Cameroon? Some Cameroonians seem to feel that it was done to meet the World Bank's economic requirements to help Cameroon rectify its economic plunge. However, World Bank officials very clearly indicate that while the government of Cameroon was urged to reduce its national budget and debt and take painful austerity steps, the World Bank never advised the government to close its TTCs. This recommendation would fly in the face of the emphasis the World Bank has been placing, since the 1980s, on the importance of primary education as a key factor in promoting national development. Blame was placed on the government as a whole, but it was impossible to determine (during our field study) who in the government made the decision.

During the closure of the colleges, many teachers in the northern region were reassigned to secondary school teaching positions in the southern Francophone region. A few administrators were supposed to remain at the school sites pending their eventual reopening, but overseeing deserted buildings was obviously neither rewarding, challenging, nor career enhancing. How solicitously the caretaking functions at school sites were performed is open to question. At some TTCs vandalism became increasingly routine, and it has been suggested that the night guards assigned to the TTCs were collaborating with those stealing doors, windows, roofs, and even toilets from the buildings. In the Far North Province two public TTCs, Kaele and Yagoua, which were not project TTCs, were so badly

plundered that if they are to function again they may have to be completely rebuilt. Regarding the project's TTCs:

1. Maroua in the Far North Province was not seriously hit and has reopened complete with its small library, part of which was funded by contributions from the citizens of San Diego, Calif., and the University of Southern California.
2. The TTC at Garoua, North Province, suffered some damage from vandals because of its location—on the edge of the city and surrounded by open fields—and because of inadequate guarding. However, since its reopening, the director, Mrs. Hayatou Hadua, who worked with SPE for the entire three and one-half years, is repairing the damage as quickly as possible and is following the SPE model faithfully and effectively. Mrs. Hadua is the only female TTC director in the project zone; she is a northerner, a Muslim, and fully committed to re-creating the TTC as it existed during the project. She is also working to help re-create the SPE model at nearby TTC Pitoa.
3. TTC Pitoa, North Province, like Garoua, suffered some vandalism. It is now operating and making every effort to reestablish its SPE program.
4. TTC Ngaoundéré, Adamaoua Province, had only slight problems resulting from vandalism and is fully operational.
5. TTC Bamenda, Northwest Province, suffered no vandalism to speak of and, like TTC Ngaoundéré, is enrolling close to the maximum number of students permitted (roughly 300).

The Cameroonian government did save money by closing the TTCs—the schools lost a significant number of teachers and administrators; the government did not need to provide scholarships to students attending the TTCs (all students had up until that time received full financial support); and the closure permitted MINEDUC to hire unqualified teachers at about half the salary paid to qualified teachers. Par-

ents became increasingly dissatisfied with the schools, and enrollments, especially in primary schools, began to drop, which in turn saved money and relieved longer term access pressures on the secondary and tertiary levels. The enrollment drops appear to have been especially prevalent in the northern provinces—the region in Cameroon that has historically been the furthest behind. The impact on the rest of the country, while serious, may have been significantly less damaging. Cameroon's secondary schools remained operational and so, too, did the universities.

The unexpected closing of all government TTCs in 1990 left only three religiously affiliated TTCs in the Northwest Province open for the next five years. The PCVs assigned to the SPE project were reassigned to these schools—Tatum (Catholic), Ndop (Baptist), and Mbengwi (Presbyterian). The volunteers continued to serve in these schools, following the SPE model to the extent possible, until the last PCV in this project activity left Cameroon in 1995. It should be noted that while these religious TTCs were not included in SPE's free training programs, they were permitted to attend at the request of SPE personnel, if they paid their own way. All of the religious TTCs agreed to these terms and participated actively during the training sessions in the Northwest Province. Also, they fully understood and agreed with the objectives of the SPE program. Among the three religious TTCs, all of which Dr. Usman visited, the SPE model appears to be functioning the best at Ndop and Mbengwi. Evidence of the SPE model is not nearly as visible at Tatum. A recent and extensive turnover in the teaching staff at Tatum helps explain this difference, since the newcomers were never fully exposed to the operating model.

In spite of the TTC closure debacle, Peace Corps officials found the goals, accomplishments, and objectives of SPE impressive, and during this study they expressed a willingness to participate again in an SPE type of project. The deputy chief of mission at the American Embassy, in a debriefing held with the SPE evalua-

tion team prior to Dr. Rideout's departure, also expressed support for a renewed Peace Corps affiliation with a project comparable to SPE.

Shortly after SPE's termination, a French technical assistance program came forward with a project that appears deliberately designed to capture, and perhaps take credit for, what SPE accomplished as well as benefit from its goodwill and reputation. The French project is known as "PASECA" (*Projet d'Appui au Système d'Enseignement Camerounais*), Project to Support the Cameroonian Educational System. According to Cameroonian officials in former SPE provinces, this project has focused mostly on short-term training of primary school directors, although it also trains secondary school teachers (mostly in French-language studies with some math and science). Such training is provided intermittently.

The program is designed and then presented to the Cameroonians—using a top-down approach. Cameroonian input is rarely solicited, and no attempt has been made to build these programs and activities into the Cameroonian structure so that they might function once French involvement is phased out. After having visited all four SPE provinces, it became clear that regardless of PASECA's intent, the training in no way resembles the SPE model. Moreover, while this could not be verified, Cameroonian officials stated that PASECA was being at least partially funded by a special tax levied on textbooks purchased in France for Cameroonian schools.

It is also interesting to note that from the time SPE was initiated, the World Bank office in Yaounde expressed interest in participating in the project or in establishing a supporting project, perhaps in those regions of Cameroon that were not included. While World Bank officials continued to express interest in possibly affiliating with SPE throughout the life of the project, nothing happened. At the same time, Cameroon's economy began to deteriorate—a process which, apparently has only recently begun to bottom out. The economic deterioration in most of Cameroon's cities, and especially Yaounde, is,

sadly, very apparent.

In 1993 Mr. Ali Kirna, director of Primary and Nursery Education, tried for more than a year to reestablish SPE. Mr. Kirna had been a key member of SPE since he was in charge of the provincial inspectorate in Garoua during much of the project. The World Bank expressed interest in assisting in this endeavor, but once again nothing happened in spite of the fact that the University of Southern California was asked to, and did, redesign the SPE model to meet the modified criteria established by MINEDUC. Apparently, the economy was not responding well to efforts to revive it, and the World Bank changed its mind about funding the SPE model revival.

The Post-Closure Situation and SPE Sustainability

Post Closure

The TTC closure decision is one in a chain of events that has wreaked havoc on Cameroon's primary education system. Rampant corruption is another. A dwindling pool of qualified teachers is still another. It is now estimated that at least 70 percent of primary school teachers are unqualified and that there is a need for at least 15,000 qualified primary school teachers throughout the country. The lack of teachers in the rural areas, especially in the northern region, is striking; rarely does a rural school have more than two teachers assigned, one of whom is also the acting school director. It is also not unusual to have student-teacher ratios of 175:1 in the rural primary schools. Textbooks and classroom teaching materials are almost nonexistent, and the physical condition of the schools is, in many cases, a threat to the well-being of the children.

It will be extremely difficult to recover from the debacle that ensued because of the government's crippling of the primary school system. Recent figures of enrollment ratios from the government of Cameroon, shown in the table below, indicate just how seriously the SPE prov-

inces were affected between 1989 and 1995. Moreover, this does not show how significantly the quality of education has eroded—a fact that Cameroonian educators are constantly emphasizing.

Some TTCs began to reopen in the 1995–1996 academic year, and by June 1996 the first limited cohort of Class I teachers was graduated. Class I teachers have high school diplomas, or “Bacs,” prior to entering the TTCs and require only one year of training to achieve the highest primary school teacher qualification. Prior to the closure of the TTCs, all students received scholarships, and all were hired by MINEDUC and assigned to school positions. When the TTCs reopened, students were required to pay fees for their schooling and were also responsible for finding their own teaching jobs once they completed their TTC programs, even though no information was available from MINEDUC on how to do so. In addition, the officials at the provincial and school-site levels were, apparently, never provided with the information and/or authority to recruit and hire new teachers. Consequently, in spite of the fact that there is a shortage of qualified primary school teachers and a large percentage of the present teaching cadre is unqualified, not one teacher graduating from TTC Bamenda in the Anglophone zone or from Ngaoundéré in the northern region was hired to teach.

The private education sector also continues to be seriously hurt by the government's evolving practice of first reducing and then stopping subsidies to the private TTCs—including those few that remained operational during the five-year closure. In fact, the principal of TTC Mbengwi stated that the Presbyterian Church was forced to consider closing most of its primary schools because the government's subsidy was reduced, then cancelled. The only thing that prevented the closures was that the teachers opted to work for little or no pay. What pay they do get now comes from parental and community support through fee payments.

The SPE Concept and Approach

In analyzing sustainability, we did not consider those SPE elements that were never implemented: the long-term training in the United States for the cadre of Cameroonian replacements and school construction. What is being considered is the SPE technical-assistance element—the only project element implemented.

There continues to be a tremendous desire on the part of educators in the SPE provinces to revitalize the project. The investigators heard this sentiment often in Yaounde and in all of the project's provincial capitals. Educators feel they need it desperately given the deterioration of the primary school system between 1990 and 1995. Three ranking Cameroonian colleagues noted that the last two ministers of education repeatedly affirmed that the government should never have allowed the project to end so soon. Thus, SPE is highly regarded and seems to have proven its worth. In addition, it is a project more needed today than when it was launched in 1984. It has the advantage of an already-trained cadre of Cameroonians available to participate in its implementation and is supported by significant Cameroon-specific project materials at the ready.

In fact in 1996, the World Bank again carefully studied, and along with Cameroonian educators prepared a draft plan to improve, the educational system. With an estimated budget of \$40 million dollars over a three- to four-year period, and with the participation of other donors (perhaps the Germans, Belgians, and/or Dutch), the foci of this new project would have been primary education, technical education at the secondary-school level, and the management of education. This project, outlined in *Rapport de Séminaire-Atelier d'Identification des Composantes du Projet Éducation V*, unfortunately did not receive World Bank funding.

The Present Condition of Project Counterparts

Project TTCs

As noted earlier in this report, the TTCs, which were the operational foundation of SPE,

suffered from a five-year shut-down. It is quite amazing that the project TTCs are now operational in spite of considerable property damage that remains unrepaired.

Most of the TTCs are presently attempting to enroll the maximum number of students, approximately 300 each. However, most of them do not yet have the faculty needed to handle this teaching load, and many of them do not have the basic accommodations required for that number of students. It is probably fair to state, based on MINEDUC's own criteria for student-teacher ratios, that each TTC in the project's provinces lacks roughly 12 teachers—or about one-third of their approved teacher-staffing pattern. In other words, even though the TTCs are open again, they are not receiving the financial support they are entitled to by MINEDUC's own standards.

A considerable number of SPE's counterparts, some of whom were TTC teachers and administrators during the project, remain at the training colleges, some in very important positions. While the number of SPE veterans left at the TTCs varies significantly, there are some encouraging statistics. For example, the director, assistant director, and over half of the teachers at TTC Bamenda are SPE alumni; the director and about half of the teachers at TTC Garoua are project alumni as well; the assistant director of Pitoa and several teachers worked with the project; the director at TTC Ngaoundéré was an inspector involved in the project, but only a couple of SPE-trained teachers remain; and the director at TTC Maroua participated in the project as an inspector, and about half of the faculty received project training.

The Inspectorate

A significantly larger proportion of inspectors who worked with SPE remain in the project's provinces. And since the TTCs reopened, the number of inspectors greatly increased because of the government's decision to assign inspectors to the arrondissement (subdivisional) level. Previously, they had been assigned no lower than

the district level. In theory, it is now possible for inspectors to visit their assigned schools regularly and become more actively involved in constructive and productive evaluations instead of simply engaging in infrequent and punitive inspections. Historically, it was geographically impossible for inspectors posted at the district or base level to meet even the minimum requirement of inspecting each school in their district once a year.

In a number of cases, the project provinces now have former project-affiliated inspectors serving as education delegates. Even delegates who had no former connection to SPE expressed support for the project and a strong desire for its return.

An interesting factor now reinforces the links established between the inspectorate and the TTCs. The present lack of experienced teachers at TTCs in Ngaoundéré and the shortage of teachers in Bamenda and Maroua is being substantially compensated for by having inspectors, many of them project trained, appointed to teach the TTCs' practical and pedagogical courses. The TTC directors are pleased to have the inspectors serve in these roles since they are well trained and highly experienced, and they serve as a solid and operational link between preservice and in-service pedagogical training.

During our visits to the former project TTC sites, we found that all project TTCs are being directed by Cameroonian counterparts who had worked with the project prior to termination, and they remain fully committed to project goals, processes, and practices. Former project participation varies widely amongst the teacher assigned to the TTCs since they reopened. In some schools nearly half the teachers were SPE trained, in others such as TTC Ngaoundéré almost none were trained. As explained above, the teachers from the south who had largely staffed the northern TTCs have, most disproportionately, permanently reestablished themselves in or near their regions of origin. Today more than ever, the northern schools are doing everything they can

to identify and recruit northerners who, it is believed, will be willing to stay in their region and serve their children. In the meantime, more unqualified teachers serve in the northern region than ever before. The government now endorses the policy of recruiting personnel locally. It is no longer attempting to "nationalize" TTC students and graduates by assigning them to schools outside of their region of origin. This thrust is also meant to reinforce a revolutionary governmental commitment in the new national constitution to promote decentralization. This commitment will be discussed in the next section.

Lessons Learned

The following is a list of lessons learned and prescriptions for the future based on SPE's experience in Cameroon from 1985 to the present and our subsequent investigation of the education system. It is likely that these lessons are relevant to development efforts in other African countries.

1. *Project Sustainability Depends on Proper Accounting, Long-Term Budgeting, and Time-Line Consensus.*

- a. *Failure to adequately cost and recognize the Cameroonian government's contributions:* At the time SPE was implemented, there was no specific requirement imposed on the GRC to contribute to the technical assistance component of the project. The government was required to provide \$73 million in personnel and land. This contribution was linked to those parts of the project that were never implemented—construction and long-term training activities.

Several thousand Cameroonians participated in the technical assistance portion of the project. However, SPE failed to calculate what the government contributed to these training costs in terms of trainees' time spent and facilities provided. We

do know that even during the last project training year, when USAID/Yaounde was considering project termination and criticizing the government's lack of cooperation, 481 Class I primary school teachers were trained in the Northwest Province. In the northern region, the total was 1,700 trained in daylong sessions. In addition, four-day workshops were held for more than 1,400 primary school teachers, TTC professors, inspectors, and administrators in the other provinces.

Obviously, there were costs associated with having trainees participate (time spent in training) as well as for the facilities used in the training sessions, especially for the four-day workshops. These costs should have been reported and recognized. What this last training year alone might have cost SPE if MINEDUC had not covered these charges clearly would have indicated that there was meaningful ministry financial support for and cooperation with SPE activities throughout the life of the project. (Much of the training in 1988 occurred during the national-level suspension declared by the minister of education mentioned earlier in this report.)

b. Lack of long-term project budgeting:

Unfortunately, there was no provision in the project design for how, when, and how much financial support for SPE activities would be phased in to MINEDUC's budget as USAID was phasing out. Because the project's termination date was never agreed upon among the three agencies involved (USAID, MINEDUC, and the University of Southern California), USAID's unilateral decision to terminate meant there was no money in the annual Cameroonian budget to continue the proposed training program for that year, even though the government had reviewed and approved the agenda. The year before the TTC closure (academic year 1988–89), the national budget of Cameroon was already under

heavy pressure. Since the project ended abruptly, there was no way that the Cameroonian government could undertake an unexpected financial commitment to perpetuate the planned training program. In hindsight, it is difficult to understand why phasing in the government of Cameroon's contributions as USAID/Yaounde's phased out was not a part of the project plan.

c. Planning without a time-line consensus:

Without a clear understanding of the duration of a project among its participants, it is impossible to plan effectively for project sustainability. This basic component was ultimately missing from SPE. USAID/Yaounde selected a termination date five years from the time the SPE agreement had been signed with the Cameroonian government, but the project ended just three and one-half years after it began to be implemented. While USAID/Yaounde had the right to end the project as it did, mixed signals were transmitted to the other project members about whether or not it would be terminated right to the end.

2. School Repair and Maintenance Procedures Are Crucial

For the most part, the schools in Cameroon (especially the primary schools) are in dangerous need of repairs and maintenance. Schools throughout the country suffer ongoing and serious damage from vandalism, and public schools are most often the target. While the SPE project addressed maintenance needs by preparing a draft of a repair and maintenance model, there was insufficient time to field test the recommendations. Today an agreed-upon procedure complete with the assignment of responsibility for construction, expansion, and maintenance is more seriously needed than ever.

3. Lack of School Equipment, Textbooks, and Learning Materials Severely Im-

pacts Learning

The problems the primary school system now faces are staggering; in many cases, particularly in rural schools, the unqualified teachers do not even have all of the required books themselves. The importance of books in terms of learning (especially in classes with a teacher-student ratio above the maximum prescription of 1:50, instead of the recommended 1:30) has been further studied and well established since SPE started. It is difficult to imagine what can be learned in rural classrooms where there are no books and the teacher-student ratio is 1:125. The negative impact on the quality of learning has to be absolutely profound.

4. TTC Libraries Can (and Should) Be Rehabilitated

The TTC libraries require extensive rehabilitation in terms of facilities and books, materials, and supplies. Even given the other problems that Cameroonian educators are now dealing with, they still consider libraries essential at the TTCs. The World Bank confirms that reading and the availability of reading materials contribute to reading achievement, one of the major components of a quality education. The SPE showed that libraries could be operated effectively at TTCs at a reasonable cost.

5. SPE is a Model for Decentralization Mandate

While the new national constitution subscribes to decentralization, it does not define how the concept should be applied. Cameroonian officials repeatedly asked the United States for assistance in designing and then applying a decentralized educational model. In fact, the SPE approach provides a useful preliminary model for shifting more control to the provincial and local levels. Though not radical, SPE was effective and appears to be congruent with what the Yaounde bureaucracy is prepared to tolerate in terms of decentralization.

In addition, the project permitted significant involvement of provincial and local personnel in the management and decision-making processes.

6. Parental Participation at School-Site Level Improves Educational Standards

An unfortunate situation illustrating the dichotomy between government policy and practice is the relatively recent debacle regarding Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs). The PTA in the Anglophone zone is comparable to those in the United States in terms of accountability, operational procedures, and ability to handle financial responsibilities. The Anglophone PTAs have been a major force in promoting improved educational standards. They have raised funds, constructed schools and classrooms, hired additional teachers if needed, and provided supplies and materials to their schools.

No PTAs exist in the Francophone zone; the only comparable institution is the Association of Parents of Students (APE), which, as the title indicates, focuses on parents only. It is much less action-oriented and, historically, has not been involved in financial management—neither raising nor expending funds. In some cases during the TTC closure, APEs began to follow the example set by the PTAs in the Anglophone zone since their own schools were deteriorating at such an alarming rate. However, it appears that substantial amounts of money collected by APEs to benefit their schools were misused and/or misappropriated.

As a result, the minister of education began to restrict the PTA's role throughout Cameroon. Instead, MINEDUC mandated the nationwide establishment of school-site management committees (*comité de gestion*) and ordered the PTA to cease interfering and participating in local school governance; the management committees were to be empowered to serve school-site needs.

This decision effectively killed parental PTA

participation in local schools—a bottom-up approach to school improvement activities that traditionally has been so important to education in the Anglophone zone. While there is supposed to be one *comité de gestion* (CD) per school, some schools have complied with the order by having one CD for as many as 100 schools. This structure, imposed from Yaounde, has no operational value. It is a bureaucratic imposition, and schools comply by affiliating with a CD—any CD; but functionally it is meaningless. Some Anglophones even accuse the central government of deliberately trying to prevent Anglophone schools from surpassing Francophone schools by undermining the highly successful school-enrichment activities of the PTA.

The crippling of the PTAs has had a devastating impact on the Anglophone school system since many PTAs and PTA members refused to participate in, or contribute to, CDs. In 1996, a year after issuing its PTA prohibitions, MINEDUC began to relax its restrictions, but the damage was already done. Despite talk of decentralization, the government mind-set continues to be that the central bureaucracy knows what is best for the entire country, and uniformity is essential even though Cameroon is a heterogeneous society. The effort to suppress the PTAs also reflects a profound difference in the colonial governance of the two zones—the Francophone direct-rule approach discouraged local control of local affairs while the Anglophone indirect-rule structure promoted local participation in local affairs.

7. Teachers Cannot Be Hired without Clear Recruiting Practices

The practices related to who employs TTC graduates and how need clarification. Since the central government apparently will no longer hire and assign jobs, these critically important tasks must be delegated to designated provincial- or school site-level educators.

8. Staffing Patterns Are Meaningless without Funding

Funds must be made available to permit the filling of TTC teaching positions that MINEDUC authorized. Without sufficient funds, the TTC staffing patterns are both worthless and demoralizing for those educators seeking to make the system effective.

9. An Expanded Inspectorate Does Not Necessarily Mean Increased School Visits

The decision to assign inspectors at the arrondissement level was critically important and commendable. However, at present the inspectors do not visit their schools as often as mandated because of lack of transport, support, and enforcement, even though there are now sufficient inspectors to accomplish the task. In addition, new inspectors could benefit significantly from participation in and exposure to the SPE program format both in terms of the training and in terms of their involvement as implementers of that model.

10. An Accurate Database Facilitates Decision-Making

An additional problem that must be addressed as soon as possible is verification of the accuracy of Cameroon's national education statistics. Cameroon's national office of the Education Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA, or ROCARE in French) has been so concerned about the country's educational statistics that it is soliciting support to conduct a representative national sample of educational facilities to determine their accuracy. Based on its own field research, the ERNWACA national committee feels that inaccurate data may well constitute a significant national problem. Establishing an accurate database is critical to the future of the nation's educational development.

11. Transparent Budget Practices Curtail Abuse

Currently there is no follow-up on budget disbursements from the Ministry of Finance, so it is impossible to know how much of the budget allocated to the provinces is actually being sent there and spent on designated programs. The delegation of funds takes place at several levels:

- Some funds are allocated to provincial delegates.
- Some funds are allocated to divisional delegates.
- Funds for primary school construction are allocated to subdivisional (arrondissement) inspectors.
- Funds for new secondary school construction are given to the provincial delegate or to the head of the school if they are to be used for extensions, rehabilitation, or equipment.

Because no one in the system has full knowledge of actual disbursements or of proper implementation, scarce resources that are critically important for the proper functioning of the schools can be easily misused. Just one example of this lack of accountability is illustrated by the following example. Even though a new teacher's monthly salary is officially listed as CFA 40,000, the teacher often only receives CFA 36,000. The government provides no explanation for the missing CFA 4,000. (*Note:* The present rate of exchange is about CFA 500 for US \$1.)

12. Private Schools Have a Place in Cameroon

Private schools in Cameroon have traditionally received government assistance, but since the TTC closure these subsidies have dwindled. Officials at the private schools complain that the government is gradually trying to take over. This policy is in direct conflict with international recommendations that education be provided at the lowest cost possible to a society. Costs per pupil at private

schools are significantly less expensive for the government. For example, the average monthly salary of a private teacher in 1994–1995 in the Northwest Province was CFA 32,108 (it ranged from CFA 16,152 to CFA 57,176). In the public sector, the average monthly salary of a primary school teacher was CFA 66,700. In terms of cost, this means that the same teacher employed in a public school might cost the government twice the amount paid to a teacher in a private school.

13. Teachers Are Professionals

SPE activities emphasized that teachers were not only civil servants, they were professionals. Individuals involved in SPE were convinced that this emphasis on professionalism had a significant impact on the performance of teachers trained by the project. While the government of Cameroon does not intend to terminate the tenure of teachers previously classified as qualified, new teacher appointments are being limited to two years, after which they must be renewed. What impact this will eventually have on the supply of qualified teachers has yet to be determined. The question that remains is how many qualified teachers will be willing to accept employment conditions that deprive them of the job security enjoyed by almost anyone in government service—both professionals and nonprofessionals—especially once Cameroon's economic recovery is realized. The institutionalization of a relatively stable professional teaching cadre may be in jeopardy.

14. Stability Depends on Quality, Equality, and Access to Education

While the Cameroonian government has reopened its TTCs, the conditions prevailing in the educational system indicate that both the quality and quantity have grossly deteriorated in Cameroon's primary education system. Given the lackluster approach the government has initiated to address various shortages in the system, the quality component is certain to continue eroding. Moreover, the inequality

of educational facilities within the country has the potential of creating political antagonism that could endanger Cameroon's future and/or stability. These discrepancies are graphically illustrated in Appendix 5, which compares illiteracy in the rural and urban areas. Appendix 7 illustrates gender differences in school attendance by province.

Suggestions for Reinforcement of SPE Sustainability

Throughout this evaluation process, the appeal from Cameroonians, Francophones as well as Anglophones, for SPE's return was universal and affective. Opinions differed as to how this might be done given the fact that the project was terminated for reasons unrelated to successful project performance and implementation.

Presently, we have a unique situation. Despite the closure of the project's foundation institutions—the TTCs—from 1990 to 1995, the TTCs are still doing their utmost to reinstitute and perpetuate the SPE model in their schools. A significant cadre, especially at senior levels of MINEDUC governance, fully understands the model, is fully committed to it, and is doing its best, with almost no financial support, to reestablish those elements of the model it can. Availability of funds is the chief stumbling block to implementing much of the model since the ministry's budget is inadequate to hire even the number of teachers the staffing patterns authorize.

SPE's other counterpart, the inspectorate, has almost doubled with the government's decision to assign inspectors at the arrondissement level after the project was terminated. The inspectors still have an impressive cadre of senior members who are fully committed to the project. Meanwhile senior-level inspectors who worked closely with SPE in the past are now attempting to keep the one-day training (*journée pédagogique*) programs for primary school teachers going while also attempting to help primary school directors improve their administra-

tive skills. In addition, many of the former project inspectors are actively involved in preservice training at the TTCs, where they provide instruction in teacher training, pedagogy, and administration. Given that the TTCs are uniformly understaffed and that they also have new faculty members who have had no previous teaching experience, the instruction inspectors provide is critically important.

In short, given the many obstacles put in SPE's way—early project termination, closure of the TTCs, etc.—it is a powerful testimonial that many Cameroonian counterpart personnel had within the year and a half before our visit attempted to reestablish as much of the project as they can. Perhaps one of the most unique components of SPE, now having been dormant for ten years, is the persistent sustainability by Cameroonian educators seeking its revival in spite of the fact that there has been no financial support provided by either GRC or other donors.

The question inevitably asked the inspectors was, "Will the USAID SPE be reestablished?" Cameroonian counterparts with SPE training are eager to once again be part of the program, which they view as desperately needed now. The materials created during the SPE for in-service and preservice training are still available. Parents and communities in the former project's provinces seek its revival as well. If the Cameroonian colleagues who so effectively participated in SPE prior to the closure were made available, then the project could be fully operational in less than a year.

The project did not fail because of implementation at the provincial and school-site operational levels. Invariably, the problems were at the central-government level—with those who created the policy and aborted the implementation—and not with the trained bureaucrats involved with project activities.

The former SPE structure with its Project Implementation Committee and subcommittees for Training and Construction was considered a model project structure to promote implementation, participation, and sustainability. However,

though compliance could be ensured below the ministerial level, the problems at the ministerial level are still likely to be an issue.

If in the near future a prime minister demonstrates the willingness and ability to ensure ministerial compliance and cooperation, then the SPE model previously developed might be reinstated and operate very effectively as a bilateral government of Cameroon-USAID project. With the USAID mission in Cameroon closed, a new logistical issue has to be considered regarding how such a project would be backstopped. Some U.S. officials noted it might be possible to place it under the jurisdiction of the Peace Corps in Cameroon since it was a partner in the original SPE.

The project might produce dramatic results if a significant decentralization component was officially incorporated into the project's governance structure.

However, if the project were to be resumed under the present Cameroonian governmental structure, it is strongly recommended that it only be undertaken in conjunction with the World Bank. Under this scenario, the World Bank would serve as the umbrella organization responsible for ensuring the Cameroonian government's cooperation and performance on behalf of the Bank and all other project donors. Given the World Bank's broad role in Cameroon's economic revival, it should be possible for it to ensure, at the ministerial level, the government's compliance with project targets and conditions. Having the World Bank responsible for this task would free participating bilateral donors—they could effectively proceed with project implementation and not be consumed with issues related to the lack of compliance at the ministerial levels of the GRC.

While World Bank representatives expressed an interest in USAID's resuming its project activities, especially in the three northern provinces, it is our recommendation that the Northwest Province, and perhaps even the Southwest Province, be included. While it is true that the northern provinces have the greatest need and that

USAID has a unique reputation of working effectively in that region, the accomplishments realized in the Anglophone region should not be overlooked. The success of the Anglophones, largely through their own initiatives, in adhering to SPE goals should not be rewarded by being excluded from future participation in USAID projects.

A new project design should also consider encouraging local community participation in school management, particularly in the Francophone zone. Training at the school-site level could be provided on topics such as how parent-teacher committees can most effectively assist in improving schools. A community training component would be completely consistent with SPE's other training functions at both the in-service and preservice levels. A model of school site-committee involvement is evolving in Lesotho, with USAID assistance, and that model is worth considering. The Lesotho model gives school committees preprinted forms to fill out for each budget line item. This procedure enables them to take part in the financial decision-making processes at their respective schools.

While a skeleton of SPE remains in Cameroon, its ability to achieve its potential training impact has been effectively blocked by a lack of budgetary muscle since the withdrawal of USAID. MINEDUC never, from the time the project was initiated, assumed a recurrent budget responsibility for SPE, and that remains unchanged today.

Any revisions of SPE should contain a commitment on the part of the government for budgetary support. Moreover, pursuant to the GRC's push to achieve meaningful governmental decentralization, the revised SPE might consider providing training for provincial and school-site level managers in areas such as planning, budgeting, and management. Inspectors, school directors, teachers, and TTC faculty and staff would be invited to take part.

Based on findings from this evaluation, project sustainability is evident in each of the SPE provinces, although the extent to which it

continues varies from province to province. However, the sustainability is manifested only insofar as it can be realized without additional budgetary support. There is no evidence that training programs for primary school teachers and primary school directors are occurring. The present focus is on TTC and inspectorate efforts to pre-

serve and transmit SPE methodology. Briefly stated, the visits to each of the provinces and their respective TTCs profoundly emphasized how important this project was, and still is, in trying to address primary education problems—problems now more serious than they ever were during the life of the project.

Appendix 1

Dr. Usman conducted his field work in December 1996 and January 1997. Dr. Rideout spent three weeks in Cameroon—one week in Yaounde followed by two weeks of travel to the provinces where the SPE project had operated. His itinerary included the Anglophone zone (a brief stop-over in Buea on the way to Bamenda) and visits to each of the project provinces in Cameroon's northern region. Dr. Usman joined Dr. Rideout in January to visit project sites at Garoua and Maroua.

After Dr. Rideout departed, Dr. Usman returned to the Northwest Province to collect questionnaires distributed by Dr. Rideout during his visit and to collect additional information related to the SPE project. This appendix provides a list of all officials contacted and interviewed. Appendix 2 contains a copy of the questionnaire. The same questionnaire was available in French and served as a guide in interviews conducted throughout Cameroon.

Meetings

December 30

Abraham Usman, USAID employee serving as the economist on the team

Jacques Goueth, economic assistant, U.S. Embassy, Yaounde. (Our assigned contact, Leroy Smith, was on leave.)

Yacouba Yaya, director of Primary and Nursery Education, Ministry of National Education, Yaounde

Mr. Belibi, subcommissioner of Health for Primary Education

December 31

Dr. Joseph Ntangsi, economist, World Bank Office, Yaounde (The World Bank education officer, Dr. Nicholas Bennett, was on leave.)

Yacouba Yaya

Dr. Richard Akoulouze, pedagogical inspector in charge of primary, nursery, and normal education.

January 1

Abraham Usman

Omer Weyi Yembe, *École Normale Supérieure*, University of Yaounde, consultant to the World Bank on the proposed "Project Education V."

January 2

Yacouba Yaya

Dr. Sam Enyong, education officer, Peace Corps, Yaounde

Dr. Richard Akoulouze

January 3

Buea: Dr. Lydia Luma, dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Buea

January 4

Traveled from Buea to Bamenda

January 6

Fon Fobuzie Martin, education delegate for the Northwest Province

Doh Frances Ndango, provincial inspector of pedagogy for primary education, Northwest Province

Mathew Basung Gwanfogbe, former provincial delegate of national education, Northwest Province

Miss Laisin Veronica, vice principal, TTC Bamenda

Simon Tening Ndifet, director of studies, TTC Bamenda

Thomas Wundo Tsongwain, principal, TTC Bamenda

Forngang Alahonsus Ndenge, former inspector
Mrs. Gwanfogbe, director, The Teachers' Cen-

tre, Bamenda
Martin Tangu, The Teachers' Centre
Kevin Ngwang Gumne, rural development consultant, Sustainable Agriculture and Self-Help (SASH) director

January 7

Traveled from Bamenda to Yaounde

January 8

Train to Ngaoundéré

January 9

Meeting with Monkaifon, delegate for primary education in Adamaoua Province (during the project, the last director of Primary and Nursery Education at MINEDUC, Yaounde)
Visit the Teacher Training College in Ngaoundéré
Meet with Ibrahima Hadii, director of ENIEG (TTC), Ngaoundéré
Travel from Ngaoundéré to Garoua.
Meet with Usman, who has returned from the United States

January 10

Saidu Oumarou-Djika, delegate for primary education, North Province
Mrs. O. Hayatou Hadua, director, Garoua TTC
Travel from Garoua to Maroua
Andre Marcel Djockoua, delegate of primary education, Far North Province

January 11

Meet again with Andre Marcel Djockoua

Tchoum Paing Palai, director of ENI/Maroua
Jacques Lawane, former chef service affaires pedagogiques, Far North Province
Return to Yaounde

January 13

Yakouba Yaya
Richard Akoulouze
Mark M. Boulware, deputy chief of mission, U.S. Embassy, Yaounde
Dorothee Kom, national coordinator, Educational Research Network for West and Central Africa
Dr. Nicholas Bennett, education officer, World Bank Office, Yaounde

January 14

Visit embassy; contact Peace Corps
Depart Yaounde via Douala to Abidjan
Arrive at Abidjan

January 15

Depart Abidjan for Bamako

January 16

Diasse Tangara, coordinator, Cellule Testing, IPN/MEB, Mali
Solomani Sangare, researcher, IPN, Mali, Principal Agenda Transnational
Brehima Tounkara, coordinator, National ROCARE (ERNWACA), IPN Mali
Dr. Lalla Ben Barka, chair, PRODEC (*Équipe de Préparation au Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Education*), Primature, Commissariat au Plan, Mali

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

In answering the following questions, elaborate as much as possible and furnish data if possible.

The Support for Primary Education Project (SPE) ended in 1989.

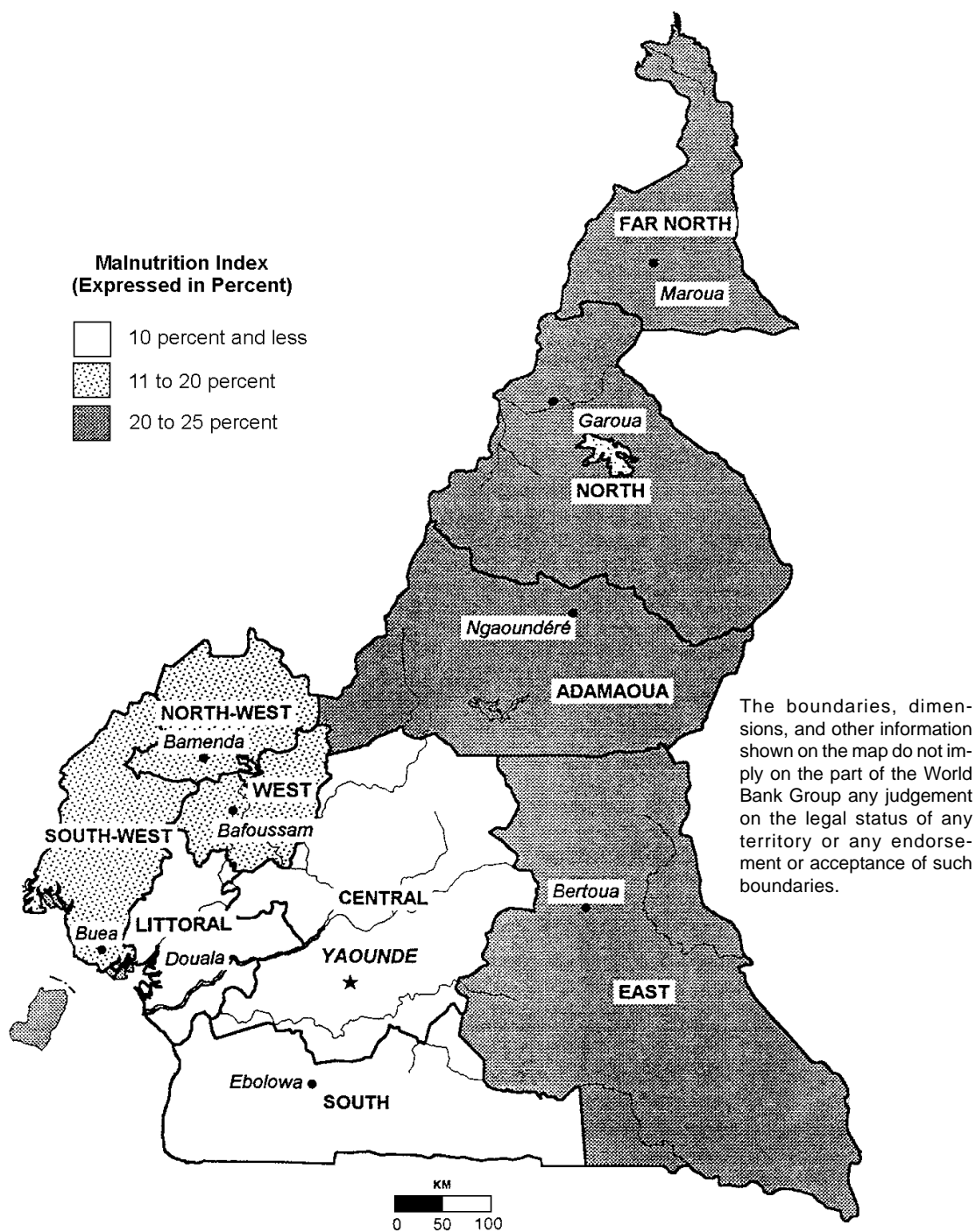
1. Put together a history of what has happened in the education system since 1989. State, if possible, any projects undertaken by other countries.
2. Is the coordination between the Inspectorate and the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) continuing?
3. Are training sessions still occurring at TTCs for in-service teachers?
4. Are materials developed by Cameroonian and project personnel still being used?
5. Is the direct collaboration between provincial offices of education, TTCs, and Inspectors continuing?
6. Are training programs continuing for school directors who are appointed to their administrative positions without appropriate training?
7. Is there a significant difference between the Anglophone and Francophone provinces in terms of perpetuating elements developed with SPE assistance?
8. Do the private educational institutions, especially the TTCs, continue to practice training and instructional practices acquired under SPE?
9. Have government funding policies influenced SPE success? To what extent?
10. Has the government assumed responsibility for sustaining SPE inputs?
11. Has the government, private sector, communities, or any other partners, been able to sustain SPE innovations? How?
12. Has replication of the SPE model occurred? How have costs been handled by Cameroonians or by the government? If there was not replication, why not?
13. Any lessons learned from the design and implementation of SPE that could be used in other parts of Africa?

Please add any additional points that you think would be important in determining SPE Project sustainability.

Appendix 3

Cameroon

Malnutrition Index by Province



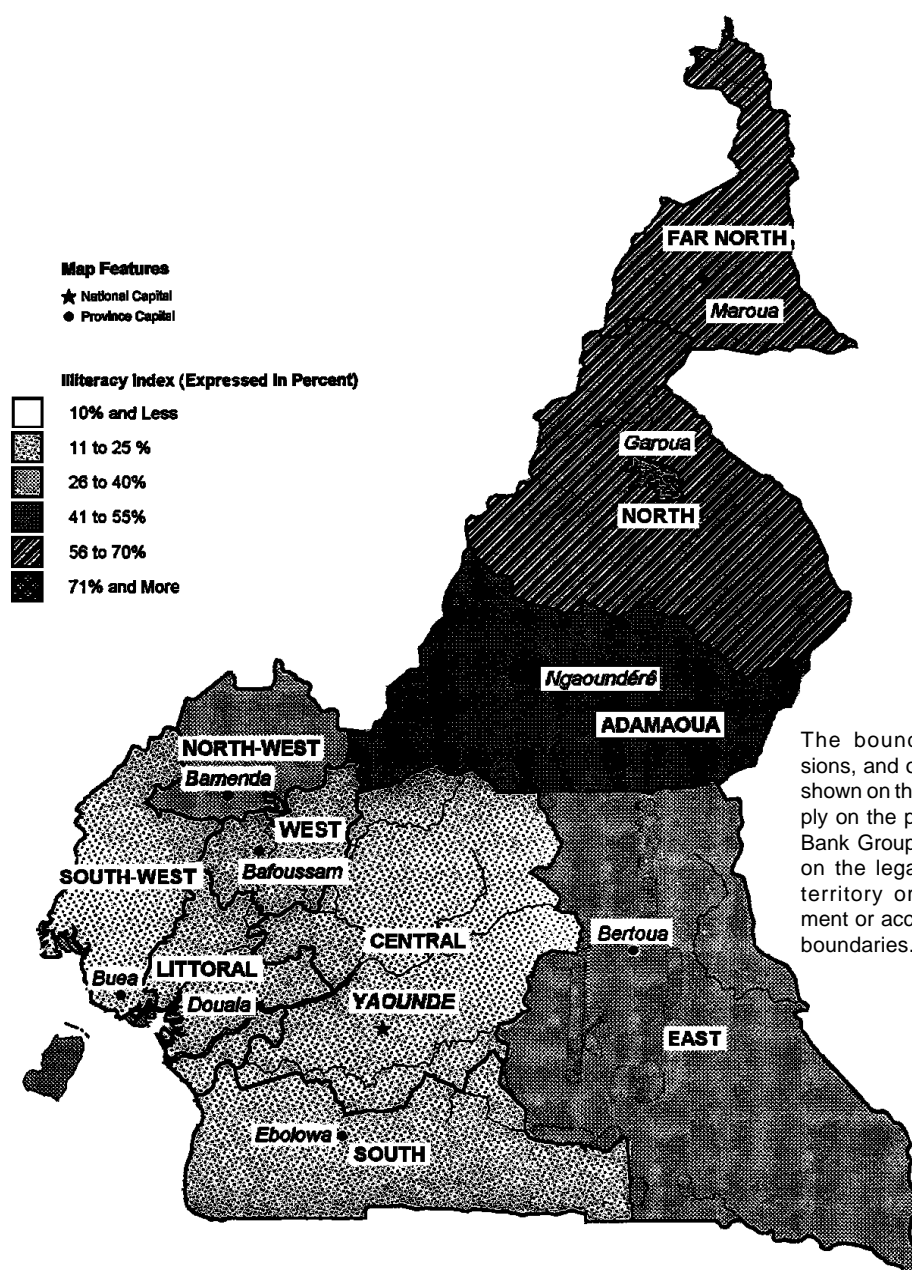
Source: World Bank, *Cameroon: Diversity, Growth, and Poverty Reduction*. Report No. 13167-CM, April 4, 1995.

RGPH (1987)

Appendix 4

Cameroon

Illiteracy Index by Province

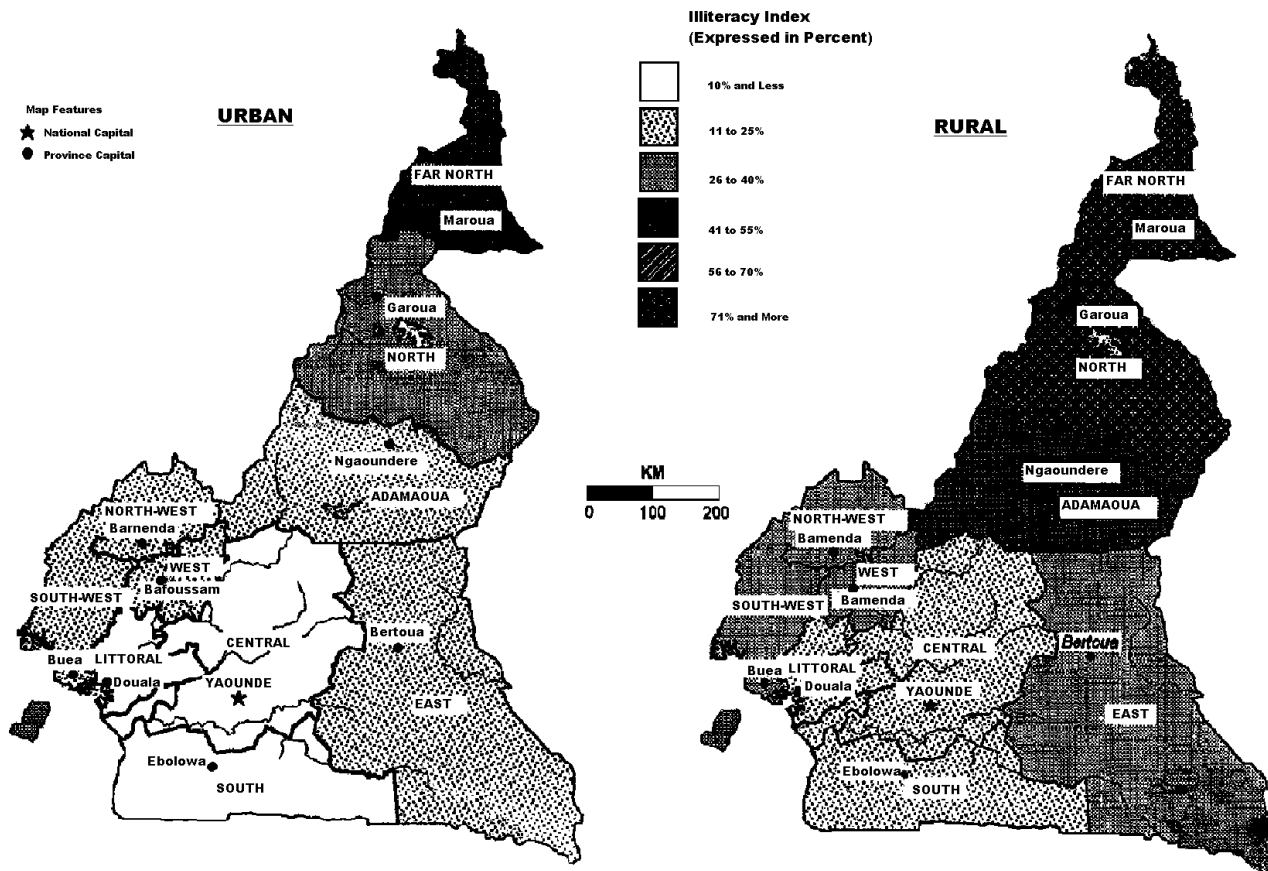


Source: World Bank, *Cameroon: Diversity, Growth, and Poverty Reduction*. Report No. 13167-CM, April 4, 1995.

Appendix 5

Cameroon

Illiteracy Index by Province

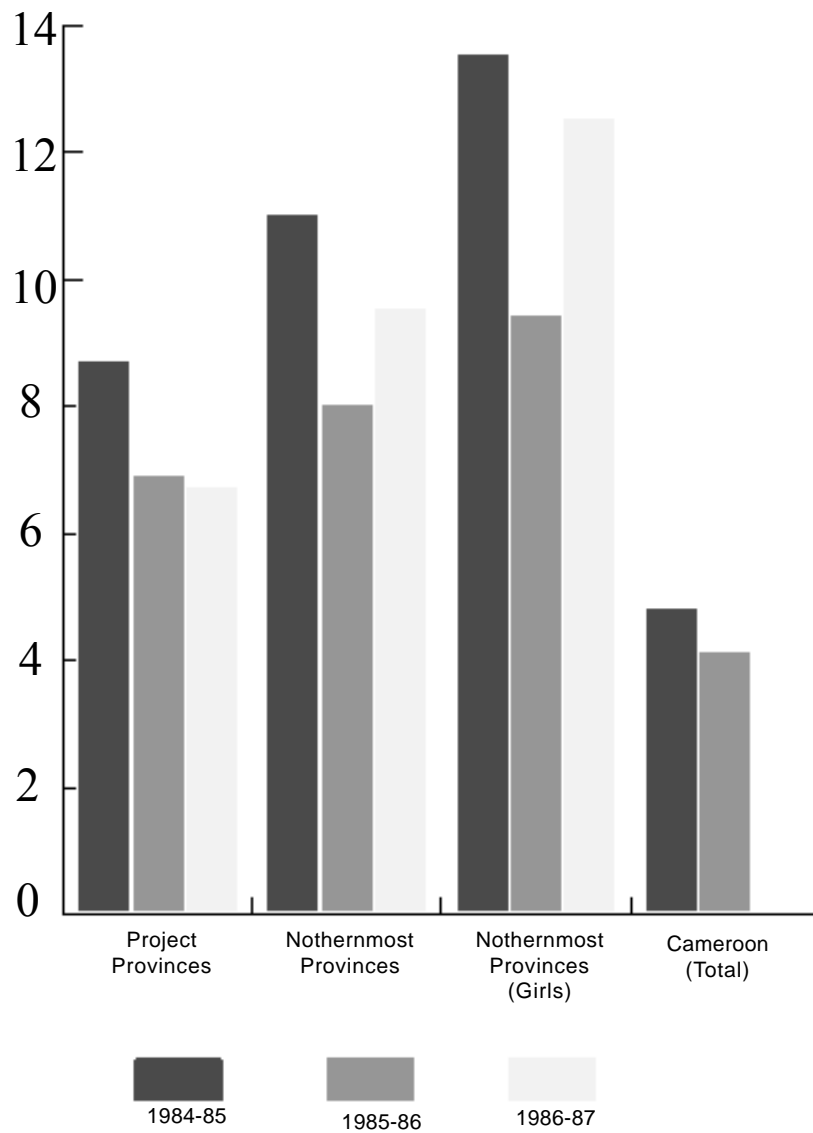


Source: World Bank, *Cameroon: Diversity, Growth, and Poverty Reduction*. Report No. 13167-CM, April 4, 1995.

The boundaries, dimensions, and other information shown on the map do not imply on the part of the World Bank Group any judgement on the legal status of any territory or any endorsement or acceptance of such boundaries.

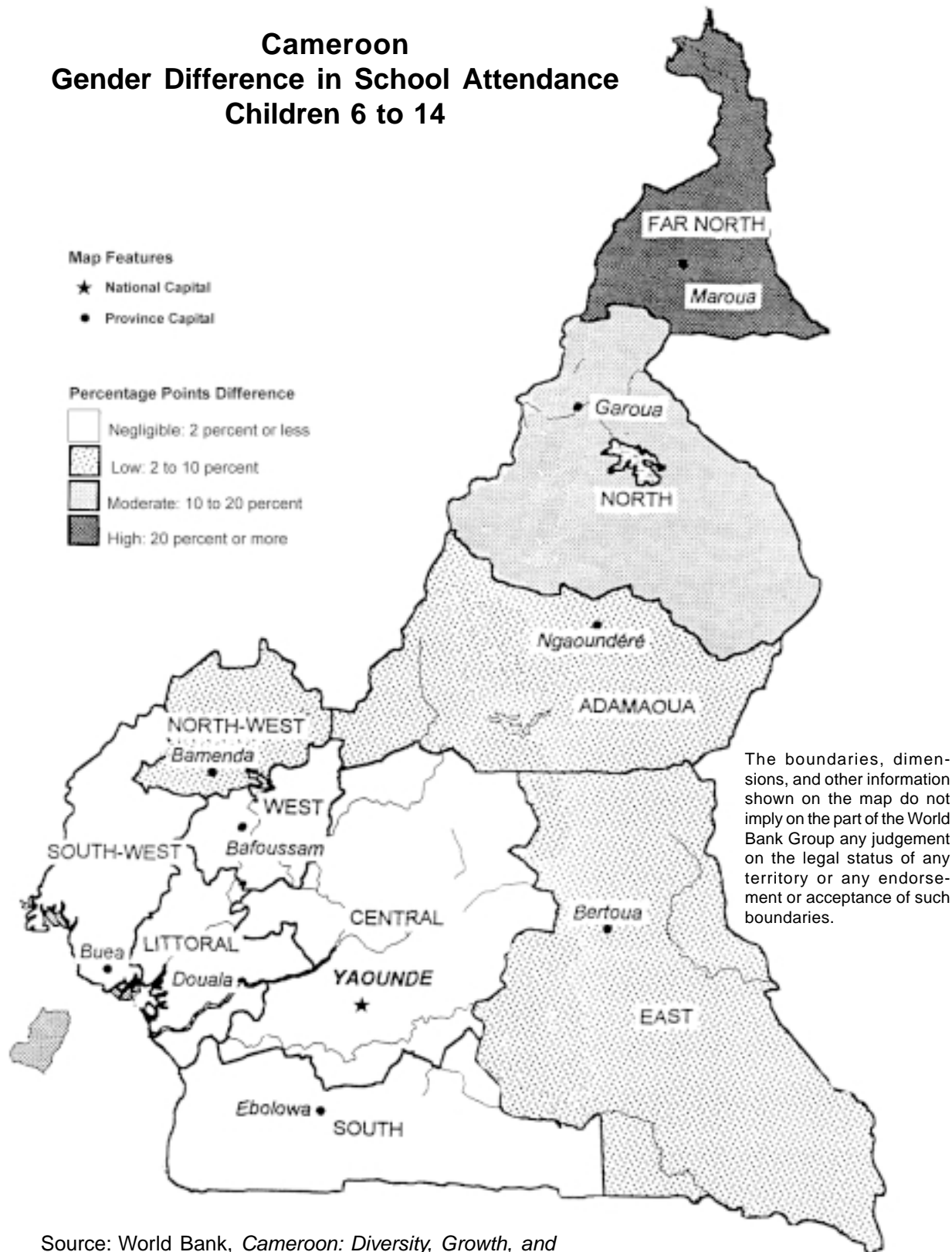
Appendix 6

Annual Percent Increase in Enrollment



Cameroon

Gender Difference in School Attendance Children 6 to 14



Source: World Bank, *Cameroon: Diversity, Growth, and Poverty Reduction*. Report No. 13167-CM, April 4, 1995.